

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

an optical disc having a disc region code assigned thereto and having content and a content identifier identifying the content recorded thereon; and

a playback apparatus for playing back the optical disc,

wherein the playback apparatus comprises:

a control unit programmed to judge whether the disc region code assigned to the optical disc matches an apparatus region code assigned to the playback apparatus; and

a playback unit programmed to play back the content when the control unit judges that the disc region code matches the apparatus region code,

wherein, the control unit is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the disc region code does not match the apparatus region code, the control unit judges whether a combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code satisfies a predetermined condition defined by an owner of rights of the content,

wherein, the playback unit is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code satisfies the predetermined condition defined by the owner of the rights of the content, the playback unit plays back the content recorded on the optical disc, and

wherein, the playback unit is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code does not satisfy the predetermined condition defined by the owner of the rights of the content, the playback unit does not play back the content.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 1,

wherein the playback apparatus further comprises a transmitting unit programmed to transmit that transmits an authorization request to a server apparatus on a network of an external system, the authorization request indicating the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code,

wherein, ~~when the predetermined condition is satisfied,~~ the server apparatus is programmed to transmit-transmits an authorization response when, based on the authorization request, the server apparatus has determined that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code satisfies the predetermined condition in reply to the authorization request, and

wherein, ~~when the predetermined condition is not satisfied,~~ the server apparatus is programmed to transmit-transmits a non-authorization response when, based on the authorization request, the server apparatus has determined that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus code does not satisfy the predetermined condition.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 2, wherein:

the server apparatus includes a playback authorization list including combinations of a content identifier and a region code, each of the combinations indicating that a content identified by a respective content identifier is allowed to be played back in a region identified by a respective region code; and

the predetermined condition is satisfied when the playback authorization list of the server apparatus includes the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code

indicated by the authorization request transmitted by the transmitting unit of the playback apparatus.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 2, wherein:

the server apparatus includes a plurality of pieces of date/time information, each of the plurality of pieces of date/time information indicating, for a corresponding combination of a content identifier and a region code, a release date/time of a content identified by the content identifier for a region identified by the region code of the corresponding combination;

the authorization request transmitted from the transmitting unit of the playback apparatus to the server apparatus includes a combination of (i) a current time in a region to which the playback apparatus belongs, (ii) the content identifier of the content to be played back, and (iii) the apparatus region code; and

the predetermined condition is satisfied when the current time included in the authorization request is past the release date/time indicated in a piece of date/time information for a corresponding combination of the content identifier and the region code that is the same as the combination of the content identifier and the region code included in the authorization request.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented) The system apparatus of Claim 2, wherein:

the server apparatus includes a plurality of pieces of distributor information, each of the plurality of pieces of distributor information indicating, for a corresponding combination of a content identifier and a region code, a distributor for a region identified by the region code of the corresponding combination;

the authorization request transmitted from the transmitting unit of the playback apparatus to the server apparatus includes a combination of (i) the content identifier of the content to be played back, (ii) the apparatus region code, and (iii) the disc region code; and

the predetermined condition is satisfied when a distributor indicated in a first piece of distributor information matches a distributor indicated in a second piece of distribution information, the first piece of distributor information indicating a distributor for a corresponding combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code that is the same as the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code included in the authorization request, and the second piece of distributor information indicating a distributor for a corresponding combination of the content identifier and the disc region code that is the same as the combination of the content identifier and the disc region code included in the authorization request.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended) The system apparatus of Claim 2, wherein:

~~the server apparatus is programmed to transmit the~~ authorization response ~~is transmitted from the server apparatus~~ along with accompanying information including (i) rating information in a country to which the playback apparatus belongs, and (ii) subtitle data and audio data in a language used in the country to which the playback apparatus belongs; and

the playback unit is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code satisfies the predetermined condition defined by the owner of the rights of the content, the playback unit plays back the content using the accompanying information.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 2, wherein:

the server apparatus is programmed to transmit the authorization response ~~is transmitted from the server apparatus~~ along with restriction information;

the content includes a digital stream recorded on the optical disc;

the restriction information is one of (i) information that indicates a part of the digital stream as a playback section and (ii) information that causes only a part of elementary streams multiplexed onto the digital stream to be played back; and

the playback unit is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code satisfies the predetermined condition defined by the owner of the rights of the content, the playback unit plays back the content using the restriction information.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn) The playback apparatus of Claim 1, wherein

the playback apparatus has a playback authorization list that includes combinations of a content identifier and a region code, the combinations each indicating that a content identified with the content identifier is allowed to be played back in a region identified with the region code in the combination, and

the predetermined condition is satisfied when the playback authorization list includes a combination of the content identifier of the content recorded on the optical disc and the apparatus region code.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn) The playback apparatus of Claim 8, wherein

the optical disc has a plurality of contents recorded thereon, and

the content identifiers included in the playback authorization list are content identifiers of part of the plurality of contents.

Claim 10 (Withdrawn) The playback apparatus of Claim 8, wherein

each of the combinations in the playback authorization list has a piece of exclusion information attached thereto indicating whether an exceptional playback of a content identified with the content identifier in the combination is exclusive or non-exclusive,

the exceptional playback is exclusive when an authorization for exceptional playback is provided exclusively for contents recorded on an optical disc to which the region code in the combination is assigned, and

the exceptional playback is non-exclusive when an authorization for exceptional playback is provided also for one or more other contents that are recorded on another optical disc to which another region code besides the region code in the combination is assigned.

Claim 11 (Withdrawn) The playback apparatus of Claim 1, wherein

the playback apparatus has a playback authorization list that includes a plurality of pieces of date/time information each indicating (i) a content identifier of a content, (ii) a region code that identifies a region in which the content is sold, and (iii) a release date/time of the content in the identified region, and

the predetermined condition is satisfied when a current time is past the release date/time indicated in such a piece of date/time information that includes the combination of the content identifier of the content and the apparatus region code.

Claim 12 (Withdrawn) The playback apparatus of Claim 1, wherein

the playback apparatus has a playback authorization list that includes a plurality of pieces of distributor information each indicating, in correspondence with combinations of a content identifier and a region code, a distributor for a region identified with the region code, and

the predetermined condition is satisfied when a distributor indicated in such a piece of distributor information that includes the combination of the content identifier of the content and the apparatus region code matches a distributor indicated in such a piece of distributor information that includes a combination of the content identifier of the content and the disc region code.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein:

an exception schedule flag is recorded on the optical disc;

the playback apparatus is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code satisfies the predetermined condition defined by the owner of the rights of the content, and when the exception schedule flag indicates that the optical disc is allowed to be played back, the playback unit plays back the content; and

the playback apparatus is programmed such that, when the control unit judges that the combination of the content identifier and the apparatus region code does not satisfy the predetermined condition defined by the owner of the rights of the content, and when the exception schedule flag indicates that the optical disc is prohibited from being played back, the playback unit does not play back the content.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn) The playback apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising

a downloading unit operable to download a piece of meta data from a data base server located in a network, by transmitting a piece of information about the content to the data base server, wherein

the content identifier is in the piece of meta data.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn) A server apparatus comprising:

a storing unit storing therein a playback authorization management table that includes combinations of a content identifier and a region code, the combinations each indicating that a content identified with the content identifier is allowed to be played back in a region identified with the region code in the combination;

a receiving unit operable to receive an authorization request transmitted from a playback apparatus;

a judging unit operable to obtain, out of the authorization request, a region code of a region to which the playback apparatus belongs and a content identifier of a content that is requested to be played back and judge whether the obtained combination of the content identifier and the region code exists in the playback authorization management table; and

a transmitting unit operable to, when the combination exists in the playback authorization management table, transmit an authorization response to the playback apparatus.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn) The server apparatus of Claim 15, further comprising:

a search unit operable to search for a management server that manages the playback apparatus, based on the region code included in the authorization request; and

a transmission controlling unit operable to cause the management server found in the search to transmit, to the playback apparatus, one of (i) subtitle data suitable for the region to which the playback apparatus belongs and (ii) a playback control application.

Claim 17 (Cancelled)

Claim 18 (Cancelled)